FGDC Annual Report to OMB
Format for Agency Reports – FY 2002

The following outline should be used by FGDC Member Agencies (or Bureaus) for their Annual Spatial Data Reports, which will be consolidated by the FGDC and submitted to OMB. Reports **should be brief, using bullets where possible**. Please provide only the information that will be useful for OMB to assess the agencies' achievements and for establishing future direction.

Part A
GENERAL FEDERAL AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES REPORT (All Agencies)

1. Agency or Bureau:
   Farm Service Agency
   United States Department of Agriculture

2. Name of Contact for Report:
   Shirley Hall
   GIS Coordinator
   Production, Emergency and Compliance Division
   Farm Service Agency
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3. Steering Committee Member: FSA is represented by the USDA Representative; Maury Mausbach of the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

4. Coordination Group Participant(s):
   Shirley Hall
   GIS Coordinator
   Production, Emergency and Compliance Division
   Farm Service Agency
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5. Subcommittee or Working Group Participation (Subcommittees or Working Groups your agency is involved with, but does not lead).

   FSA does not currently have staff actively participating in FGDC Subcommittees or Working Groups.

6. Strategy: Has your agency prepared a detailed strategy for integrating geographic information and spatial data activities into your business process - in coordination with the FGDC strategy, pursuant to OMB Circular A-16? If yes, briefly describe.

   Yes. FSA has prepared a GIS Implementation Blueprint that lays out GIS Implementation for the Agency, integrating the coordination of imagery acquisition, data acquisition and reengineering of program development. Included in the plan is how FSA works with USDA Service Center

Agencies and others to implement standards and limit redundant activities in the GIS arena.

7. Compliance: How are your spatial data holdings compliant with FGDC Standards? Also, please list the FGDC Standards you are using or plan to use in your organization.

   FSA provides FGDC compliant metadata for all nationally sanctioned geographic data created by the agency. All digital imagery meets National Map Accuracy Standards. FSA collects and stores in a database FGDC compliant metadata for new digital ortho imagery. FSA is currently using the content standard for geospatial metadata.

8. Redundancy: Prior to collecting data, how does your agency ensure that the data are not already available?

   FSA has been managing farm field boundaries in a manual mapping environment for decades. FSA has also been flying aerial photography for compliance purposes since the 1970's. This data has been an authoritative source for local governments in rural areas. Conversion of this data to digital geospatial data will be a significant asset to local governments and other users, particularly in rural areas.

   FSA works in cooperation and partnership with national, multi-agency coordination groups including the National Aerial Photography Program and the National Digital Ortho Photography Program. The agency has also worked with other agencies, such as the State of California and the Dept of the Interior to share farm-field boundary information in geospatial format, to avoid duplication of efforts.

9. Collection: Do your agency contracts and grants involving data collection include costs for NSDI standards?

   Yes. FSA contract specification for geodata acquisition includes requirements for information that will be used for FGDC compliant metatdata.

10. Clearinghouse: Is all the data and/or metadata that your agency is able to share with the public published on the NSDI Clearinghouse? If not, please cite barriers encountered.

    FSA is pursuing NSDI clearinghouse status. Barriers have included a lack of resources that can be dedicated to the task.

11. E-Gov: How are you using geospatial data in your mission activities to provide better services? (Please list)

    FSA must have critical geodata infrastructure in place to be able to fully integrate GIS into mission activities. Key program components of this data infrastructure are digitized farm and field boundaries (called

Common Land Units) and mosaicked digital orthophotography (MDOQ) that create seamless county views across the nation. Currently, FSA has 22 states where CLU digitizing and MDOQ acquisition are underway or have been completed. These states use geodata to provide better service to our customers. Remaining states will integrate mission activities with GIS as core data is acquired for them. Examples of better services FSA will provide when critical geodata is fully available across the nation and integrated with program development:

- Ability, when used in conjunction with FSA's vast amount of land and customer information, to effectively administer farm and farm loan programs, as well effectively respond to natural disaster, animal or plant disease outbreaks, and bio-terrorism events. FSA will be able to effectively pass this information to other agencies such as FEMA, APHIS, and state and local emergency management officials.

- Ability, in the incident of a weather disaster event, to accurately identify, map with GPS units, and import the information into GIS for graphical display and analysis. Supports submission of complete Noninsured Assistance Program (NAP) disaster requests, allowing timely establishment of NAP disaster areas.

- Standardized accurate measurements of fields from a digital orthophotography base and digital compliance aerial photography for determining acreage for contracts, verification of land eligibility, acreage reports, and compliance work.

- Ability to implement streamlined compliance process which will have greater consistency between USDA Service Centers, reduce errors, and make available a permanent digital record of the compliance activities.

- Timely identification of potential Highly Erodible Lands and more accurate definition of Wetlands Conservation boundaries. Agency will have the ability to deal with smaller, more environmentally sensitive acreage, often found in irregularly shaped areas, by providing a more accurate, streamlined, and faster method for program processing.

- Ability to create high quality, accurate, customized maps for customers on demand, instead of distributing outdated, poor quality photocopies. Ability to maintain and share these maps digitally, eliminating printing distribution and storage of hard copy maps. Better graphical display of information lead to improved decisions by land users and managers.

- Ability to create and share data with farmers and private industry using advanced technology in farm operations.

12. Geospatial One-Stop: How is your agency involved in the Geospatial One-Stop?

    FSA transferred $45,000 in FY02 funds to the Department Of Interior (DOI) for this project. We have also named 11 staff members who will be made available to participate in standards development, inventory of existing and planned geodata, web mapping and clearinghouse services, and deployment of commercial grade portal services. USDA has provided draft estimates for FY03 funding and FTE involvement. FSA figures are consistent with the FY02 submissions. FSA anticipate that FY04 contributions will be similar to FY03.

13. Enterprise Architecture: Is geospatial data a component of your enterprise architecture? Please provide a brief summary of how geospatial data fits into your enterprise architecture.

    Yes. Geospatial data is at the core of our emerging enterprise architecture. Almost all of FSA's business is tied directly to land activities and can not be managed effectively without reference to maps or geospatial data. As such, FSA is in the process of converting manual maps to digital format to directly link geospatial information to tabular program data.

14. Partnerships: What efforts are being taken to coordinate data and build partnerships at the field level for data collection and standards development? Identify partnerships and data sharing activities with other federal agencies, state, local, and tribal governments and other entities.

    FSA participates in and was one of the founding members of the National Aerial Photography Program and the National Ortho-photography Program. Both programs provide for partnerships at the State level and with other federal agencies for imagery acquisition. As one the USDA Service Center Agencies, FSA works with the Natural Resource Conservation Service and Rural Development Agencies to identify, acquire, share and create development and use standards for geospatial data. This partnership continues at the local level with Service Center cooperators such as Soil and Water Conservation Districts. At the State level, FSA State Office GIS Coordinators are working with state agencies and other state entities to identify potential partnerships for a pilot FSA compliance and replacement imagery program called the National Agriculture Imagery Program.

15. Concerns or Lessons Learned: Are there areas or issues regarding spatial data that require attention, or lessons learned that you would like to share with others? Please describe.

    - Without sufficient funding, Agencies cannot implement GIS into mission activities in timely or effectively manner. This limits our ability to improve services and fully integrate E-Gov capability into day-to-day operations.

- Historically, funding for GIS initiatives has been inconsistent, and when funded, only limited resources were provided. Without consistent funding, it is extremely difficult for Federal agencies to collaborate with state and local entities in a timely manner and capitalize on data acquisition using pooled resources.